

June 13, 1941

Reservation Center Nears End of 30 Year Effort to Get Library

Wapato library boosters, rejoicing this week because work has actually begun on the building for a public library, have struggled for 30 years to get such an improvement for the reservation center.

Thirty years ago, Wapato's library started with a unit of the state traveling library. It was located in A. E. DeVries' jewelry store with Mrs. DeVries in charge of the books.

Everyone Helps

Later the Wapato Women's club held the first library ball and added some books to those of the state library. Then the books were moved to the city hall and placed on shelves at one end of the council chamber. Mrs. H. J. Sourwine succeeded Mrs. DeVries as librarian and Mrs. George Ley in time became the third librarian. During the depression there were no funds to pay a librarian so three city clerks, Dr. C. H. Dills, Mrs. C. A. Norton and Mrs. Della Livengood in turn combined the work of serving as librarians with their other tasks. Mrs. Bessie Saling served for a short time and then, in 1935, Mrs. George Ley was appointed librarian. She has handled the work ever since.

In 1935, during the administration of Mayor J. B. Gilmore, the project of a library building was promoted by the library board. Everybody was in favor of building but lack of funds kept the work from being started. Now, with Dr. George Hodgson as mayor and with the co-operation of the WPA, a real library is being erected.

Volunteer Board

Supervision over the library is exercised by the library board, composed of members of the different clubs of the district. Mrs. George Rodman, Mrs. George Hanson and Mrs. R. R. Wright were the officers of the first board. In the early days of the library board, the American Legion auxiliary sponsored drives to obtain books for the library. The Progressive club, giving up its idea of a community clubhouse, changed its club building fund to a library building fund.

Both organizations have maintained their interest in a library building, a service in which they have been assisted by other club groups. Every year since 1935, some one big effort has been made to raise funds to use to buy books, of which the library now has about 2600.

Many Donate

The library is open two days weekly and its circulation last year was 9000 books. A number of organizations and people have donated books to the library with the Japanese association giving books on Japanese art and history and the Altar society books dealing with Americanization. Fred Brown has donated a large book case and the Athenaeum and Garden clubs have given books and magazines annually.

Officers of the library board for this year are Mrs. George Rodman,

president; Mrs. George Hanson, vice president; Mrs. Gordon Putman secretary and Mrs. J. E. Colenso treasurer. These women were charter members of the library board and have worked ever since for a building. On the special committee for the building are Mrs. O. A. Jones, Mrs. George Dunn and Mrs. Clark Johnson, also library workers since the beginning of the project. Councilmen on the library committee are S. N. Matsen, Harry Logan and Karel Heuterman.

Ivey Draws Plans

Edwin J. Ivey, a noted architect, drew plans for the new library and presented them to the council. He was called by death before the building could be started so John W. Maloney completed the detailed plans and specifications.

Gifts and suggestions are already being received for the new library. Mrs. Gordon Putman has suggested collecting specimens of the arts of the Yakima-Indian and starting a museum of such material in the library basement. Mayor Gilmore is donating an electric wall clock. Mrs. W. G. Boyd has given \$100 for a Nellie Short memorial in the library. The Garden club will handle the landscaping of the grounds with the shrubbery needed already promised by the May Nursery Co. There's no doubt now that Wapato will soon have a real public library.

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